

Application No. 10/002,616
Amendment dated February 23, 2004
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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

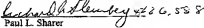
Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 3, and 21-35 will be pending of which claims 1 and 3 are independent. Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 9. Furthermore, all claims that were dependent on claim 1 have been cancelled. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the cancelled claims in, e.g., a continuation application. Consequently, no new matter has been introduced, no additional claims have been added, and no new issues have been raised. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested as it is believed to place the application in condition for allowance and/or better condition for Appeal.

Preliminarily, regarding the Restriction Requirement, Applicants affirm the election of Group I, claims 1-19 and 21-35.

Applicants note that the Examiner has allowed claims 3 and 21-35, and has indicated claim 9 to contain allowable subject matter. See the Office Action dated October 21, 2003. In this regard, Applicants further note that claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form as present claim 1, and that all claims other than 1, 3, and 21-35 have been cancelled. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all instant claims are in condition for allowance.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,
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